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October 6, 2000

Jeff Senger, Esq.  
Deputy Senior Counsel  
Department of Justice  
Office of Dispute Resolution  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20530-0001

RE: Public Comment on the Confidentiality Statement  
published in the Federal Register

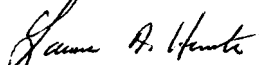
Dear Mr. Senger,

I was pleased to learn of the draft notice regarding the confidentiality of mediating under the ADRA. As someone who regularly mediates for the United States Postal Service, The United States Forest Service, and the United States Navy, as well as commercial, business, and employment disputes in Southern California, I have the following brief comments:

The more confidential the mediation process, the better the interest of the parties participating in the mediation is served. If you view mediation as a process to empower people with information, to better equip the parties to understand the other sides' perspective, and to explore constructive resolution with as much information as possible, there is great value in affording confidentiality protection to the process. The draft statement is an excellent first step. By serving to clarify accurately what confidentiality protections are afforded under ADRA, parties will be more knowledgeable and comfortable with the mediation process.

Respectively submitted,

HUERTA & ASSOCIATES

  
Lawrence A. Huerta